AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as indicated below. This listing of claims will replace all prior claims, and listings of claims, in the application:

Claims 1-28 (Canceled).

Claim 29 (currently amended): A vehicle surroundings monitoring apparatus ~~comprising~~ having a vehicle surroundings monitoring program configured to perform the steps of:

~~first means for~~ detecting at least solid object information ahead of an own vehicle;

~~second means for~~ estimating a travel path of the own vehicle;

~~third means for~~ recognizing a preceding vehicle traveling in front of the travel path of the own vehicle based on the solid object information;

~~fourth means for~~ judging whether there is any forward traveling object, which travels in the same direction as the own vehicle, other than the preceding vehicle based on the solid object information;

~~fifth means for~~ setting a parameter in response to both a lengthwise and a widthwise distance of the preceding vehicle from the own vehicle;

~~sixth means for~~ adjusting the parameter in a case where any forward traveling object other than the preceding vehicle has been judged;

~~seventh means for~~ judging whether the adjusted parameter is larger than a threshold value; and

~~eighth means for~~ judging that the preceding vehicle is not traveling in front of the travel path of the own vehicle in a case where the adjusted parameter is larger than the threshold value and outputting a signal.

Claim 30 (previously presented): The vehicle surroundings monitoring apparatus according to claim 29, wherein the parameter is cleared when the lengthwise distance is farther than a preestablished distance.

Claim 31 (previously presented): The vehicle surroundings monitoring apparatus according to claim 29, wherein the parameter is set to increase when the preceding vehicle is in a region comprising an area of a predetermined width and length around the travel path of the own vehicle.

Claim 32 (previously presented): The vehicle surroundings monitoring apparatus according to claim 31, wherein the parameter is set to increase as the preceding vehicle approaches the own vehicle region.

Claim 33 (previously presented): A travel control system for controlling the travel of an own vehicle at least based on the output signal from the vehicle surroundings monitoring apparatus described in claim 29.